

Message Text

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ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 FDRE-00 EB-07 IGA-01 DODE-00 IO-10

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P R 241511Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1288

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

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FOR AID/AA/AFR DR. ADAMS AND AF/BLAKE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: N/A

SUBJECT: AFDROUGHT: MALI AND NIGER FOOD NEEDS

REF: STATE 172801 AND PREVIOUS.

1. REFTEL SUGGESTS IT MAY BE USEFUL FOR DEPARTMENT AND AID TO HAVE FURTHER CLARIFICATION AND BACKGROUND IN GON REQUEST TO DIVERT COTONOU/GAO SHIPMENTS. GON HAS NEVER QUESTIONED MALI'S NEEDS FOR US SORGHUM AND ON EVERY OCCASION IN WHICH WE HAVE DISCUSSED MATTER WITH LOCAL OFFICIALS, THEY HAVE INDICATED THEIR WILLINGNESS TO FACILITATE AND COOPERATE. IN FACT, AS BOTH GON AND WE HAVE POINTED OUT, IT IN NIGER'S INTEREST TO HAVE ADEQUATE STOCKS OF FOOD IN SIXTH REGION OF MALI. ACCORDINGLY, WE ARE CONFIDENT THERE IS NO QUESTION OF GON "CONCURRENCE AND FULL SUPPORT TO TRANSIT OPERATION" (APRA 2 REFTEL). THIS HAS BEEN ACCORDED. FURTHER, WE ARE CONFIDENT GON IS PREPARED "COOPERATE IN TRANSIT OF COTONOU/GAO SHIPMENTS" (SAME REF).

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2. AS WE SEE IT, PROBLEM AT HAND IS NOT GON

COOPERATION, BUT MESSY SITUATION IN PARAKOU OVER WHICH GON HAS NO RESPONSIBILITY OR CONTROL. AS REPORTED COTONOU 1021, PARAKOU HAS BECOME BOTTLENECK BECAUSE NEITHER SOCOTRA OR SOCOPAO ARE PERFORMING AS THEY SHOULD AND TRUCKERS PREPARED TRAVEL TO GAO ARE HARD TO LOCATE. FYI: LATEST REPORTS RECEIVED FROM DAHOMEY JULY 23 INDICATE THAT AS RESULTS HEAVY RAINS ROADS BETWEEN BOHICON AND PARAKOU AND SECONDLY BETWEEN PARAKOU AND NIGER BORDER ARE IN POOR SHAPE AND NOT MANY TRUCKERS ARE WILLING MAKE TRIP, TO SAY NOTHING OF ADDITIONAL LEG FROM NIGER BORDER TO GAO WHICH IN SPITE OF IMPROVEMENTS IS VIEWED BY TRUCKERS WITH CONSIDERABLE LACK OF ENTHUSIASM. END FYI. POINT IS ALL THIS IS OUR PROBLEM AND THAT OF TRANSITAIRES AND NOT RPT NOT THAT OF GON.

3. SHOULD BOTTLENECK AT PARAKOU BE RESOLVED WITH FORWARD MOVEMENT OF GRAIN TO GAO WE BELIEVE GON WILL COOPERATE IN AREA WHERE IT HAS ROLE TO PLAY, I.E. OCDN PRIORITIES ON SHIPMENT OF COMMODITIES FROM COTONOU TO PARAKOU. NOWEVER, FOR MOMENT THIS IS ACADEMIC POINT BECAUSE PARAKOU BOTTLENECK MUST FIRST BE RESOLVED.

4. PRESIDENT KOUNTCHE'S REQUEST TO AMBASSADOR FOR DIVERSION OF SOME OF SORGHUM FROM MALI TO NIGER CONVEYED FIRST INDIRECTLY ON JULY 19 AND TEN PERSONALLY ON JULY 21 SHOULD NOT RPT NOT BE INTERPRETED AS GON LACK OF COOPERATION OR DESIRE SABOTAGE SHIPMENTS TO MALI. IT WAS MADE AGAINST BACKGROUND OF EXPERIENCES LAST YEAR WHEN DONORS JUGGLED SHIPMENTS TO MEET VARYING DEMANDS AND TO OVERCOME VARIETY OF BOTTLENECKS. LAST YEAR GRAIN HEADED FOR MALI OR CHAD ENDED UP IN NIGER AND VICE VERSA. WE BELIEVE HIS REQUEST REFLECTED BOTH HIS CONCERN THAT NEED IN NIGER IS URGENT AND VIEW THAT GIVEN DRAW DOWN IN NIGER STOCKS BOTH MALI AND US WOULD COOPERATE WITH HIM AS HE WAS ON RECORD AS WILLING TO COOPERATE WITH MALI.

5. WORTH NOTING IN THIS CONNECTION THAT GON CHARACTERISTICALLY IS NOT WAITING FOR DONOR RESPONSE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND IS MOBILIZING ITS OWN RESOURCES. WE INFORMED AT LEAST 1,000 TONS OF GRAIN ARE BEING MOVED FROM N'GUIGMI TO TILLABERY-FILINGUE AREA OF NIAMEY DEPARTMENT IN RESPONSE URGENT NEEDS THERE (REF ROME 10425)

6. IN SHORT, WE PLEASED NOTE WE AUTHORIZED ASSURE GON THAT US HAS GRAIN IN ABIDJAN WHICH COULD BE USED TO HELP RESPOND TO SHORTAGE WHICH MAY BE FOUND TO EXIST

IN NIGER. BEFORE CONVEYING THIS MESSAGEAN HOWEVER, REQUEST
CLARIFICATION OF EXACTLY WHAT ADDITIONAL
COOPERATION DEPARTMENT AND AID EXPECT FROM GON
BEYOND THAT ALREADY ACCORDED THAT HAS BEARING
ON BREAKING BOTTLENECK IN PARAKOU AND MOVING
GRAIN TO GAO.HECK

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